

have earned and deserve—supporting them as they carry out their missions and ensuring they get their shot at the American dream they helped to defend. As a Nation, we are called to recognize the enormous debt of gratitude we owe the members of our Armed Forces, and we must never forget those who laid down their lives to safeguard our freedoms, or their loved ones who carry their legacies forward.

Today and every day, let us celebrate the women and men who make our military the greatest fighting force the world has ever known. As a grateful Nation, let us show our appreciation by working to uphold the values they protect every day and by continuing to strive to build a country worthy of their enormous sacrifice.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, continuing the precedent of my predecessors in office, do hereby proclaim the third Saturday of each May as Armed Forces Day.

I direct the Secretary of Defense on behalf of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, and the Secretary of Homeland Security on behalf of the Coast Guard, to plan for appropriate observances each year, with the Secretary of Defense responsible for encouraging the participation and cooperation of civil authorities and private citizens.

I invite the Governors of the United States and its Territories, and appropriate officials of all units of government, to provide for the observance of Armed Forces Day within their jurisdiction each year in an appropriate manner designed to increase public understanding and appreciation of the Armed Forces of the United States. I also invite veterans, civic leaders, and organizations to join in the observance of Armed Forces Day.

Finally, I call upon all Americans to display the flag of the United States at their homes on Armed Forces Day, and I urge citizens to learn more about military service by attending and participating in the local observances of the day. I also encourage Americans to volunteer at organizations that provide support to our troops and their families.

Proclamation 9129 of May 16, 2014, is hereby superseded.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand fifteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-ninth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 9284 of May 18, 2015

50th Anniversary of Head Start

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

Supporting our children in their earliest years with high-quality care and education is one of the best investments we can make as a Nation—and for 50 years, Head Start has helped to lift up millions of America's children

and their families in communities across our country. The oldest and largest Federal program to deliver high-quality early learning opportunities to low-income children, Head Start was founded on the idea that every child—no matter who they are, what they look like, or where they grow up—deserves the chance to reach their full potential. Since 1965, it has given meaning to the simple truth that in America, where you start should not determine how far you can go.

In the last half-century, Head Start has served 32 million children, supporting them in every aspect of their development—from early learning and health and nutrition to social and emotional well-being. Designed to cultivate original ideas and innovative approaches to preparing children for success later in school and in life, Head Start has pioneered new solutions to fight the harmful effects of poverty and build ladders of opportunity into the middle class. In small towns and large cities—in America’s immigrant communities and with migrant and seasonal families, faith-based communities, and tribal leaders—Head Start programs and providers empower children and their families to foster positive parent-child relationships, to reach for economic and family stability, and to make important connections to their peers and their communities.

During a critical period in a child’s life, Head Start sets our Nation’s young people on the path to success. We know that investments in early childhood education boost graduation rates, increase earnings, and reduce violent crime. And 3- and 4-year-olds who attend high-quality preschool—including Head Start—are less likely to repeat a grade, less likely to need special education, and more likely to graduate from high school. This head start in life leaves a lasting impact on our students and fuels their curiosity, helping them to grow up with a passion for learning, a fair shot at good-paying jobs, and a more secure future.

This year also marks the 20th anniversary of Early Head Start, created to enhance the impact of Head Start by serving children from birth to age 3, as well as expectant mothers—ensuring all children receive the best care possible. This expansion has made a real difference for thousands of infants, toddlers, and their families. As President, I have endeavored to strengthen Head Start and build on its legacy. My Administration has expanded the program to reach tens of thousands of additional children and families in the depth of the economic recession. We have instituted reforms to raise the standards and focus on improving outcomes across Head Start programs and classrooms, so that children and families can rely on the highest quality of services. And we have launched new ways to build connections between Early Head Start and America’s child care subsidy system to reach additional infants and toddlers in need of high-quality early care and education. We will continue to invest in Head Start and strive to expand its reach to additional children and families throughout America. Our children deserve nothing less.

Despite five decades of tremendous success, too many young people still grow up without access to a world-class education. Instead of receiving a head start in life, they start out a step behind. As a Nation, we must continue our work to ensure the promise of education is within reach for all our daughters and sons. That is why I have proposed a series of new investments that will establish a continuum of high-quality early learning for

every child, beginning at birth and continuing to age 5. This year, I unveiled a plan that would make quality child care available to every middle-class and low-income family with young children under the age of 3. I have also called on the Congress to expand access to high-quality preschool and full-day kindergarten for every child in America. And I am calling on all Americans—including leaders of private and philanthropic organizations, communities, and governments at every level—to make their own commitments to our children, an effort that has already led to an investment of more than \$1 billion to support our next generation of thinkers, dreamers, and doers.

The history of Head Start has taught us that if our Nation invests in the future of all our children, we can strengthen our economy, bolster our communities, and give every young person the chance to build a better life. As we mark the 50th anniversary of Head Start, let us rededicate ourselves to building an education system worthy of our daughters' and sons' enormous potential, and to providing a strong, healthy, and safe head start in life for all of America's children.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 18, 2015, as the 50th Anniversary of Head Start. I call upon all Americans to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities that recognize the importance of this vital program and support high-quality education for all Americans.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighteenth day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand fifteen, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-ninth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 9285 of May 20, 2015

National Maritime Day, 2015

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

For over two centuries, proud mariners have set sail in defense of our people and in pursuit of opportunity. Through periods of conflict and times of peace, our Nation has relied on the United States Merchant Marine to transport goods to and from our shores and deliver troops and supplies around the world. On National Maritime Day, we honor the women and men who take to the seas to boost our economy and uphold the values we cherish.

Our Nation is forever indebted to the brave privateers who helped secure our independence, fearlessly supplying our Revolutionary forces with muskets and ammunition. Throughout history, their legacy has been carried forward by courageous seafarers who have faithfully served our Nation as part of the United States Merchant Marine—bold individuals who emerged triumphant in the face of attacks from the British fleet in the War of 1812,